STATE OF VERMONT Agency of Administration ORIGINAL POLICY ADOPTED BY STC DATE: EFFECTIVE DATE 3/1/06 ASSOCIATED DOCUMENTS Policy for Web Look and Feel of Vermont Web Sites

STATUTORY REFERENCE

OR OTHER AUTHORITY: Web Look and Feel Policy

APPROVAL DATE:

APPROVED BY: Secretary of Administration

POLICY TITLE: Web Look and Feel Standards

POLICY STATEMENT:

Introduction

The purpose of the Web Look and Feel Standard for State of Vermont websites is to create a clear and consistent identity for state websites that aid users in the identification of official state communications. This standard provides the minimally acceptable components that every state website must include. Additional standards exist to accommodate GIS based web pages and mobile devices.

1 Definitions

- 1.1 Standard In this document the word standard is used to mean "required element of the state look and feel policy implementation."
- 1.2 Base Domain The root page of a given organization's website.
- 1.3 Home Page The page that appears when the base domain name is entered into a web browser.

2 Website Design Standards

- 2.1 Banner The top 70 pixels of every page will be taken up by the site banner. The banner will include the vertical arrangement "Moon over the Mountains" logo and the title of the site. Specifications for each of these are available below. The background of the banner area will be left to the discretion of the sponsoring organization and may be either a background color or graphic.
- 2.2 Vermont State Logo Every state site will have the vertical arrangement "Moon over the Mountains" logo placed on the left-hand side of the banner. This logo will link back to the home page of the current site. Two standard versions of the logo will be created for web use one for light and one for dark backgrounds. These logos are available through the Chief Marketing Officer. These graphics will be 50 pixels tall. The logo should be centered vertically in the banner and approximately 10 pixels from the left edge of the banner.
- 2.3 Title The title of every state website will consist of two parts, the name of the site and the agency or department that oversees the state entity or program producing the site. (For example, "Office of Child Support, Agency of Human Services" or "Vermont Emergency Management, Department of Public Safety" or for top level sites "Agency of Administration, State of Vermont.") Sites sponsored by a state organization but not directly owned by said organization may begin the second line of the title with the words, "Sponsored by" or "Hosted by." (An example being "Vermont Information Consortium, Sponsored by the Office of the CIO")
- 2.3.1 The website title will be the equivalent of 24 point Ariel on a 1024x768 pixel display and the agency or department name will be the equivalent of 10 point Ariel on a 1024x768 pixel display. Text should be scaled in relative terms in coding state websites. The agency or department name will share a baseline with the vertical arrangement of the "Moon over the Mountains" logo (the logo is available through the Chief Marketing Officer's Office.) The Site name will appear approximately 5 pixels above this. Both lines will be left justified. The font size of the site name may be adjusted downward if the name is unusually long and must wrap.
- 2.4 Top Navigation Top navigation must be included and shall appear directly beneath the banner. The top navigation must include a link to Vermont.gov and contain the search box (see sections 2.10.2 and 2.10.3). The remainder of the bar will be available for site-specific links.
- 2.5 Left Navigation On pages where left navigation is used, left navigation will appear directly below the top navigation and occupy the left-most 20% but not less than 150 pixels of the webpage.

- 2.6 Right Navigation On pages where right navigation is used, right navigation will appear directly below the top navigation and occupies the right most 15-20% but not less than 150 pixels of the webpage.
- 2.7 Body The body occupies that space below the top navigation and between the left and right navigation areas as defined in section 2.5 and 2.6. Ideally this area will expand to fill the display of any monitor with resolution set higher than 1024x768 pixels.
- 2.8 Font Size of Non-Graphic Text Every state website will use a font sized to approximate the equivalent of 10 point Arial on a 1024 x 768 pixel display for body text. Header text will be noticeably larger than body text. Text should be scaled in relative terms in coding state websites. This can be easily accomplished with the use of Cascading Style Sheets (CSS).
- 2.9 Footer The footer for every state website will be of a standard format to give users surety that they are dealing with an official Vermont State Government website or affiliate. The footer will occupy a fixed pixel size on all pages contained in a particular site. The footer will appear at the bottom of the screen and will accommodate the content requirements of the site. The footer will include links to the state Accessibility Policy, Privacy Policy, Web Security Statement, Copyright Information, and a link to Vermont.gov. There will also be text reading, "A Vermont Government Website" and "Copyright 20xx State of Vermont." The footer may also include other site specific nonnavigational links or linked logos as desired or needed, for example, contact information for the webmaster of the site or a site map.
- 2.10 Standard Site Components Every state website shall contain the following components.
- 2.10.1 Home Page Link The "Moon over the Mountains" logo and site title in the banner will both link back to the site's home page.
- 2.10.2 Portal Link The left-most link in the top navigation bar will be Vermont.gov.
- 2.10.3 Search The search box shall appear at the far right of the top navigation bar and will search the current site. This should consist of a search box, allowing the user to type their search query immediately, rather than via a link to a search page.
- 2.10.4 Agency Information Every website will have an "about" section that describes the function of the website owner (e.g. the agency, department, division, or program) and its services. Typically this section provides descriptive information about the website owner such as its place in state government, location of offices, and mission statement.
- 2.10.5 Contact Information Every website must contain contact information including but not limited to: emails, phone numbers and street addresses for the website owner. The site must also contain contact information for users having accessibility problems. A link to this information typically appears in the top or left navigation of a site.
- 2.10.6 Site Map A page showing the logical flowchart of the site. This should appear in outline form.
- 2.11 Page Formatting
- 2.11.1 Page Width Webpages must be viewable without horizontal scrolling on a 1024x768-pixel screen display. A site may be presented in a smaller format (600x800) if required to accommodate the users of that site. If a page is not designed to stretch to a larger screen size then the page must be coded to center itself on higher resolution displays.
- 2.11.2 Frames Frames shall not be used on state websites. Screen readers are unable to read them intelligibly. W3C guidelines on frames and alternatives to frames are available from (http://www.w3.org/TR/WCAG10-HTML-TECHS/#edef-NOFRAMES). Iframes may be used in a site but not in any of the navigation areas. If iframes are used they must be accompanied by an alternate text link to the content contained in the frame.
- 3 Exemptions
- 3.1 Additional Standards exist to accommodate GIS based Web pages and mobile devices. Additional Standards will be created for application Web pages and touch screen

- platforms. These additional standards may waive certain aspects of the Look and Feel Standards that are not consistent with the proper functioning of these types of specialty pages.
- 3.2 In the event that this standard conflicts with the needs of a state website, organizations may submit a request for an exemption from a web standard section or element. A formal written request shall be submitted to the Chief Information Officer (CIO) and Chief Marketing Officer (CMO) and must include specific reference to each standard section, sub-section, or part that the website wishes to deviate from and a written explanation justifying each deviation. The request should also include a description of the proposed alternative for each requested exemption. The CIO and CMO will be responsible for reviewing and approving requests for exemptions. Exemptions will be made on an individual basis and will apply only to the specific website described in the request.

APPROVED		
	Secretary of Administration	Date